



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Tuesday, January 19, 2021 –4:00 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

This meeting will be held via video conference, consistent with Gov. Baker's temporary modifications to Open Meeting Law due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Joanne Semanie
Absent: Selectman Ed Silva
Administrative Staff: Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary, Paul McLatchy III Administrative Assistant
Staff: Board of Health Chair Maggie Rice
Audience: Ben Werner, Rowe Camp & Conference Center

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 4:05 P.M., a quorum of the board present via remote participation.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: yes

Silva: absent

Vice-Chair Semanie: yes

Background: This group of individuals (self-titled "Covid Group") has been meeting weekly for the past few months to listen to the state Covid-19 briefings and discuss ongoing matters in town related to the pandemic. As Board of Health (BOH) Clerk Joanne Semanie was elected last Saturday to the Board of Selectmen, there is now a quorum of the board present during these weekly meetings, and as such, must take place in open session.

Covid Discussion: The following points/topics were addressed during discussion:
Maggie Rice, Board of Health Chair reported the following:

- There are some local COVID cases in area towns and a family in Rowe
- There was discussion about vaccine distribution and that there were still unknowns about how the distribution will take place
- There was discussion about a complaint about the Fire Dept. not wearing masks
- There was discussion about creating a policy relating to Town Employees wearing masks and that the employee must provide documentation if they have a medical issue preventing them from wearing a mask. A Policy created by Chair Sokol concerning mask wearing and referencing Mass. state COVID-19 Order No. 55 enacting the policy.

MOTION TO ACCEPT POLICY: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept

- There was discussion about citizens having the same services afforded to those wearing masks and it was determined that The BOH will discuss the matter affecting the transfer station.

The following message was prepared for the Public Notification System:

Good Evening Rowe Residents,

The following is the weekly message regarding the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Topics include information regarding vaccination rollout phases, case growth in our region, and guidelines on how to stay safe between now and when a vaccine becomes available to you.

The State of Massachusetts has established a phased approach to allocate vaccination doses as they become available, which can be found to by following the link on the [Rowe town website](#), or by visiting [Mass.gov](#)

The Rowe Coronavirus Task Force is staying informed about when a locally distributed vaccination will be available for qualifying individuals as determined by the Massachusetts vaccine distribution timeline. Although no specific information has been provided by the state regarding when local supplies of vaccines will be available, we will provide that information to the public as soon as we have more details. Additionally, it is possible that you may receive information from your physician or your pharmacist when they begin receiving supplies of vaccines that may be available to you through their facilities. However, just like the Rowe Coronavirus Task Force, these organizations are also waiting for vaccine supplies and additional guidance on the distribution timeline.

While we wait for vaccines to become more widely available, it is important to know that the number of infected individuals continues to grow in our region. Although the growth is slower than it was immediately following the holidays, the numbers are still increasing.

As we wait for our chance to receive a vaccine, it is more critical than ever that we continue efforts to curb the spread of the virus. In Massachusetts, daily infections from the coronavirus are approximately eight (8) times higher, and daily deaths have increased by a factor of approximately seven (7) since the low-point in early September ([source](#)). Until this virus has been eradicated, we must remember to reduce exposure to others, to remain steadfast in mask-wearing whenever in public, to maintain distance when around others, to minimize time in indoor public spaces, and whenever possible to limit travel. Even with vaccines becoming available, all these measures are more important than ever to keep ourselves and each other safe.

The Rowe Coronavirus task force will continue to keep you updated on these and other coronavirus topics on an on-going basis, typically with weekly updates or when prudent.

Thank you and stay healthy.

~Chuck Sokol

Adjournment:

MOTION: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting 4:47 p.m. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: yes

Silva: absent

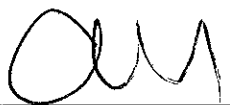
Vice-Chair Semanie: yes

Respectfully Submitted,

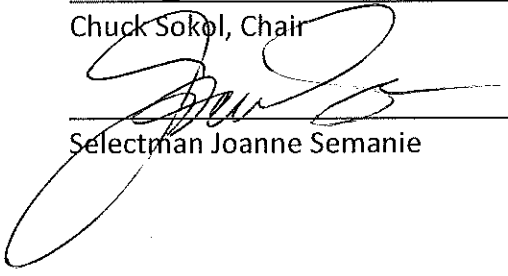
Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: FEBRUARY 4, 2021

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair



Selectman Joanne Semanie

Documents:

- Agenda January 19, 2021
- MEMO: COVID-19 Requirement to Wear a Face Covering
- COVID-19 Revised Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places – COVID-19 Order No. 55